

**DATING THE SYSTEMA ENTOMOLOGIÆ, BY  
FABRICIUS AND PAPILLONS EXOTIQUES  
VOLUME I, BY CRAMER**

BY WILLIAM P. COMSTOCK

These two works were apparently published in the year 1775 but there is no definite evidence to show which appeared first.

Both Fabricius and Cramer, in their texts, refer very extensively to prior authors and both frequently cite Drury's second volume (1773), this being chronologically the last mentioned by either. This merely shows that both authors included the latest references available to them before completing their own manuscripts. Neither author cites the other.

An extensive examination of contemporary literature and bibliographies, and later works of reference, fails to produce evidence of value, with the exception of Sulzer whose references, though negative, are of interest.

"Dr. Sulzers Abgekürzte Geschichte der Insecten" I, 1776, with a dedication dated "Winterthur, den 2 Marz. 1776" and signed Joh. Heinrich Sulzer, contains in the preface a review of previous literature. On page XI, in a foot note, he says that in 1775 Cramer issued the first, second and third parts of his work, each part containing 12 plates. Thus Sulzer, at the time of writing his manuscript had seen only three parts of Cramer's work. On page XVII he gives a résumé of the Systema of Fabricius and on page XVIII, in a foot note, he quotes the full title of the work with the date 1775. It is evident that at the time of writing his manuscript, Sulzer had the complete work of Fabricius.

The date on the title page of volume I of Cramer is 1779, but the work is supposed to have appeared in parts in the years 1775 and 1776. The Catalogue of Books etc. of the British Museum, volume VI, supplement (1922) gives data taken from a copy of Cramer's work with the original wrappers in the Rothschild library. The listing for volume I is:

Parts 1-7; i-xxx, 1-16, 1-132, pls. 1-84, 1775.

Part 8; 133-155, pls. 85-96, 1776.

From this wrapper dating it has been assumed that the first seven parts of volume I appeared in 1775 but the evidence from Sulzer introduces a doubt for he mentions only three parts or 36 plates up to March 2nd 1776.

There is internal evidence to show that Cramer was working on his manuscript during the year 1774 for on page XXVII of his dedication he mentions Drury, 1771 (the first volume) and then "l'année dernière, d'un second tome" referring to Drury's second volume (1773). Further the dedication is dated on page XXX: "Amsteldam ce 2 Decembre 1774."

The date of the *Systema Entomologiæ* seems to be generally accepted as that of the title page, 1775, but there is an earlier date mentioned; that of the dedication on the following page: "Havniæ d. XXI. Nov. 1774."

It is my suggestion that the completed Fabrician work actually appeared very early in the year 1775.

I have been unable to find an actual proof of priority of publication of the work of Fabricius but the indications are in favor of it. If no other evidence<sup>1</sup> is later produced, I think that the slight priority of date in the Fabrician dedication, 21 November, 1774 over Cramer's dedication 2 December, 1774 may be used to fix priority.

A further fact, that carries considerable weight, is that the priority of the *Systema* over the first volume of Cramer is well established by usage. W. F. Kirby in his *Synonymic Catalogue of Diurnal Lepidoptera* (1871) consistently recognized this priority, placing many names appearing in Cramer's first volume as synonyms of names in the *Systema* of Fabricius. I am not aware that Kirby's action has ever been disputed on the ground of priority of the works.

## PAPILIO LAVINA, FABRICIUS AND CRAMER

BY WILLIAM P. COMSTOCK

*Papilio lavinia* Cramer, (1775: I, 32, pl. 21, C, D) is a homonym of *Papilio lavinia* Fabricius, (1775: 450, No. 32) and the Cramer

<sup>1</sup> I have been unable to check one reference—J. Beckmann: *Physikalisch-ökonomische Bibliothek*, vols. 7 and 8 (23 vols., 1770-1806). A copy in the Library of Congress is at present unavailable.

name cannot be used. Forbes (1928: 305) says of it: "It was based on a specimen from Surinam, but it happens that Surinam is a meeting place of northern and southern forms, and typical *lavinia* is not typical of any of the well-marked races of the species. I suppose it should be used of one or another of the races, but it happens to be such an exact blend of the principal northern and southern forms that I am not using it as a subspecies name." Forbes places *oriana* Kirby (1894-1908: III, 24, pl. 51, fig. 3, 4) as the normal wet form in British and Dutch Guiana and says: ". . . my specimens show traces of green iridescence, and the original figure of *lavinia* shows fully developed iridescence, but has the pattern of this form, which perhaps should not be separated from *l. lavinia*." The butterfly named *lavinia* by Cramer seems to be an aberration with an invalid name. A name for such a form is unnecessary and no new name need be selected.

As Forbes' use of *Precis lavinia* as a stem name is no longer tenable another name must be selected. The next available name is *Papilio evarete* Cramer (1779: III, 18, pl. 203, C, D) which Forbes places as an aberration of *lavinia*. The designation of *evarete* as the stem name of this group of *Precis* subspecies though unavoidable is undesirable, but it is certainly closer to the wide spread *zonalis*.

NOTE. After the proof had been returned I examined "The Autobiography of John Christian Fabricius" as translated from the Danish by Rev. F. W. Hope (1845-1847: Trans. Ent. Soc., London, i-xvi). Fabricius remarked: "In 1775, at Easter, during the great fair at Leipsig, my 'Systema Entomologiæ' appeared." This definitely dates that publication. W. P. Comstock.

#### REFERENCES

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